
BATTLE FOR RIVERTOP



Battle for Rivertop

Rumours & Hooks

The frontier outpost of *Rivertop*, situated on the cliffs of *Lake Argos*, has dispatched an urgent messenger to the closest city. Reports suggest Rivertop's alliance with the *Thunder Crow* barbarian clan has come to an end, and the outlanders wish to bolster their numbers with mercenaries.

Broken Alliance

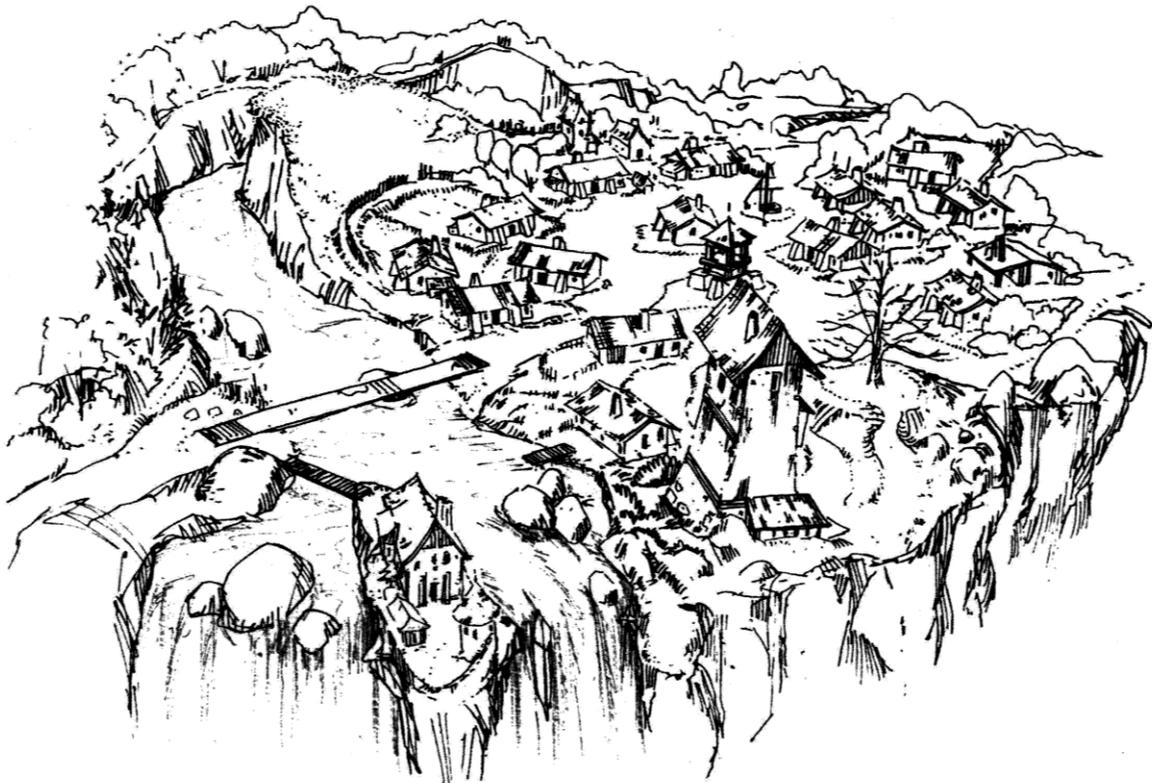
On a low cliff overlooking Lake Argos, the Midlander outpost of Rivertop has endured for several years, defying the surrounding wilds to carve out an unlikely sanctuary.

Occupied by frontier rangers, miners and explorers, the settlement previously held to an uneasy truce with the local *Thunder Crow* barbarian clan in return for quality steel. For almost a decade, the alliance was enough to ward off incursions by beastmen and other predators.

Unfortunately for all concerned however, the truce has come to an end. The daughter of *Chieftain Drommoc* died of disease two weeks ago, and the superstitious clan believes the city dwellers somehow brought the sickness upon them. Overwhelmed by despair, Drommoc has withdrawn his people and departed, leaving Rivertop to its fate.

With the withdrawal of the Thunder Crows, the *Mortog* skorn tribe has decided the humans of Rivertop are long overdue for eating. *Karg Orok*, the tribe chief, has recruited the ogre *Sorgat* and his kin to assist in their assault.

The adventurers might become involved in this adventure by (i) being hired as mercenaries to protect the outpost or (ii) being in the right place at the wrong time, boarding at Rivertop on their way to another location.



Skorn

Also known as halfmen or beastmen, skorn are heavy set proto-humans with long arms and oversized jaws. They would be 7 ft tall but for their stooping stature. Dull witted cannibals, they are more beast than man, raiding human outposts and caravans from nearby wildlands.

Devoid of empathy, skorn prefer to eat humans before their own elderly or young, and will hunt animals if they must. Some tribes cultivate lycanthropy, using infection as a special honour for favoured warriors. Skorn lycanthropy is a unique strain that does not infect humans, only their own race. If a tribe is infected, animals of a similar species are considered sacred, and may not be hunted or eaten.

Skorn, AC 11, HD 1, Club 1d6+1, 19: the target is clubbed in the head, losing its next action (*Luck (Will)* save resists), S15 D10 C13 I7 P12 W8 Ch8, LA, Mv 30 ft. Advantage on checks to sense danger or detecting scents.

Karg Orok is an old but hulking halfman with dead eyes and broken teeth. He speaks snippets of common, learnt from past victims (mainly *No!* and *Argona save us!*). Orok has been infected with wolf lycanthropy for many years, but has spread the infection to only a handful of his best and most trusted warriors (see Area 3).

Werewolf, AC 13, HD 6+4, Bite 2d6, 19: a wolf (60%) or dire wolf (40%) comes to the lycanthrope's aid, S18 D14 C14 I8 P15 W13 Ch8, L8, Mv 30 ft. Werewolves may control wolves, giant wolves and dire wolves. They gain advantage on smell related tests. Lycanthropes regenerate all damage caused by non-magical weapons at the start of their next turn, or in 1d6 minutes if reduced to zero hit points. Damage from silvered weapon or fire is not regenerated. A lycanthrope reduced to zero hit points and completely dismembered, burnt, buried or similar does not regenerate. Skorn lycanthropy cannot be spread to non-skorn.

Rivertop

Rivertop is an isolated outpost of approximately 100 - 200 hunters, trackers, miners and guards (depending on domicile rolls, see later). The settlement consists of a score of wooden buildings, nestled beside the cliffs, with the powerful *Greygush* river hedging out the wilderness beyond. Two sturdy log bridges to the west are the only means of egress (excepting watercraft). The air here is crisp and cool, and the grounds littered with tall pines. The silver mine supporting the outpost is located beneath Area 8.



2d10+40 of the population are heavily armed guards, with heavy chainmail, shields, spears and swords. About half of the guards have access to heavy crossbows. All of the residents have weapons and armour of one kind or another, including hunting bows, axes and knives.

The outpost is controlled by *Antos Kreig*, a 6 ft, blonde veteran ranger who leads from the front and has earned the respect of his men many times over. Kreig is convinced the departure of the barbarian clan means a beastman attack is inevitable, but is waiting to see whether enough mercenaries can be drawn from nearby cities

before deciding whether to abandon Rivertop completely. He is extremely angry that the outpost's merchant investors are unwilling to pay for more guards in a timely fashion, and has taken matters into his own hands, sending messengers to nearby cities to recruit mercenaries. If the PCs come to Rivertop looking for work, he offers them payment in silver nuggets (taken straight from the mine, and out of his investors pockets, much to his satisfaction).

Antos Kreig, AC 15 (hardened leathers, shoulder guards), HD 5, Sword 1d8+3 (two hands) or long bow (1d8+2), 19: Kreig slices off a limb (sword) or forces a morale check (bow), S14 D15 C13 I13 P13 W13 Ch14, L8, Mv 30 ft. Kreig may use the following Rangercraft talents (up to three times per combat): *Sharpshooter*, *Veteran Scout*, *Nature's Venom* and *Cover Fire*. He gains advantage on all wilderness related checks.

Guards, AC 16 (heavy chain and shield), HD 1, Spear 1d6+2 (two hands), Sword 1d8+1,

Longbow 1d8+1, or Heavy Crossbow 2d8+1, 19: as weapon, S13 D10 C11 I10 P12 W10 Ch10, L4, Mv 30 ft.

Outpost locations

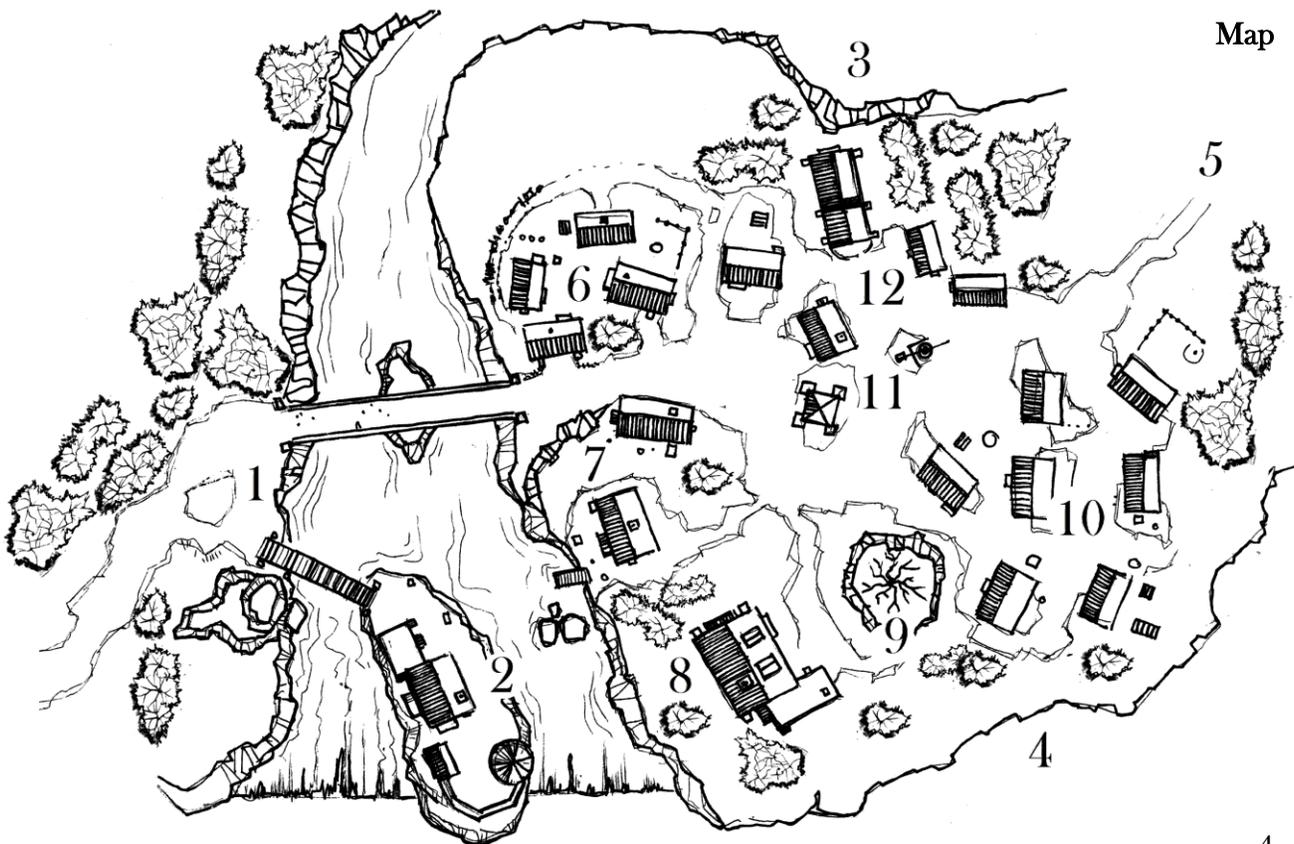
Note that Areas 1, 3 and 5 are dealt with under *Initial Assault* below.

Area 2 - Barracks

This 30 ft by 50 building is the outpost's barracks, with stores of rations, ammunition (bolts, arrows, 2d4 fire pots), weapons (swords, spears, crossbows, bows) and armour (hardened leather, chain, shields). 1d10+20 guards are on site here at any time, at least half of which are on sentry duty in Area 1. The barracks captain is *Teren*, 20's, a haughty but competent leader with a habit of tapping his helmet and declaring "up here for thinkin'" (Str 15, Int 9, Will 15).

Area 4 - Cliffs

The southern cliffs drop hundreds of feet to a narrow plateau that recedes into further cliffs down to Lake Argos far below. Anyone falling or



thrown off the edge must make a *Luck* (Dex) save or plummet to their doom. As a last resort, it might be possible to escape the attack by scaling the cliffs (ideally with climbing gear) and hiding in one or more shallow caves (15% chance of finding a shallow cave each minute of searching, doubling the chance with a successful Int (Wilderness Lore) or Perc (Detection) check.

Area 6 – Western Domiciles

These 20 ft by 15 ft domiciles house various frontiersmen such as hunters, trackers, miners and fishermen. The men are armed with basic weapons (knives, axes, bows, some swords) and armour (varied leather). 2d4+2 outlanders live in each building.

Outlander, AC 11 (leathers), HD 1, Axe 1d6, Short bow 1d6, 19: as weapon, S12 D11 C10 I10 P10 W10 Ch10, L4, Mv 30 ft.

Area 7 – Blacksmith and Fishery

These two larger buildings comprise a blacksmith (for forging mining tools, weapons and repairing armour) and fishery (storing fishing gear, salted catches, and so on). 2d4 men and women live or work here.

The blacksmith, *Chelsa*, is in her 40s, short, broad shouldered with grey hair and a roguish smile. Chelsa has always been drawn to the frontier and the unknown, and did a bit of adventuring when she was young (Fighter 3, Str 15, has a suit of heavy mail and a *silvered* sword out back). Chelsa kind of considers herself the “moma bear” of the outpost, and will join the battle wherever the fighting is thickest. The men respect her like no other, gaining advantage on morale checks as long as the blacksmith can be seen or heard.

Area 8 – Mine

This towering structure is at least 20 ft by 30 ft, two stories high and encloses the silver mine shaft below. The doors have locks but are generally left unlocked to allow the miners easy access. 1d10 +

20 miners are working and living on site at any one time. Approximately 5d100 + 1000 gp worth of silver ore is stored here, ready for shipment.

The branching mine shafts are quite long, with a number of dead ends, loops and vertical pulley shafts. One tunnel was recently sealed off due to noxious gas concerns. If that particular tunnel is lit, the entire shaft explodes, causing 10d10 damage (*Luck* (Dex) save for half, but survivors are buried alive unless situated on the outskirts). Other tunnels might possibly be used for hiding. Most of the miners know the shafts well, and *Old Noddy* (50s, bald, slim corded muscles) knows them like the back of his hand, even in the dark.

Area 9 – Dead Tree

A large 60 ft pine tree stands in this area, long dead (by lightning strike, disease, or old age is hard to say), covered with moss and lichen. Some folk say a sky spirit is trapped within, imprisoned after a terrible storm, when lightning struck the trunk. They say the spirit can be heard straining against its physical bonds from time to time, when the old boughs creak and groan, despite nary a breeze.

Area 10 – Eastern Domiciles & Stable

These 20 ft by 15 ft domiciles are similar to Area 6, including the number of men and armaments etc. The eastern most building however is a stable of 2d10 strong, deft mountain ponies, that cart the silver ore back to the nearest city. One pony, *Gumble*, is particularly stoic and will fight alongside the humans if given the chance (as *Horse*, 14 hp, Mv 40 ft, advantage on morale checks).

Area 11 – Bell Tower & Well

A 20 ft tall, wooden bell tower is situated in the middle of the outpost, with a working iron bell to warn of impending danger. When the assault begins, a random resident rushes to the tower to raise the alarm, drawing everyone out of their homes with weapons at the ready. The tower is relatively narrow, with a wooden staircase and

balcony, but provides an excellent vantage point for spotting and missile fire, plus three quarter cover (+5 AC). 2d4 archers and/or crossbowmen attend the belltower once the fighting begins.

Area 12 - Northern Domiciles & Mill

These 20 ft by 15 ft domiciles are similar to Area 6, including the number of men and armaments etc. The largest building however is a lumber mill and carpentry shed (2d4 woodsmen/carpenters inside). A recently finished skiff with oars can be found inside.



Initial Assault

When the assault commences, it becomes clear that there are three main areas of simultaneous danger (Areas 1, 3 & 5) to contend with. The attack begins at first light, after the beastmen and their allies have had time to secretly position during the early hours.

Area 1 - Two Bridges

The two western bridges face one of the heaviest assaults, with 5d10+50 skorn screaming battle cries as they surge out from nearby trees to attempt a crossing. Of this warband, all wield clubs or jagged flinty knives, plus a javelin, and 50% also carry short bows. Accompanying the vanguard are 2d4+1 subjugated *Dire Wolves*.

Dire Wolf, AC 13, HD 3+4, Bite 2d4+1, 19: a wolf (60%) or dire wolf (40%) comes to aid the dire wolf, S18 D15 C17 I2 P13 W14 Ch6, L6, Mv 60 ft. Advantage when tracking and on attack rolls when flanking.

When the halfmen begin their crossing, they first release the dire wolves, which surge across the main bridge. Skorn with bows hang back to provide covering fire for their allies or shoot flaming arrows into buildings. About half of the skorn attack the small 50 ft by 10 ft bridge and barracks in Area 2, and the other half make for the main 100ft by 20 ft bridge, hoping to punch through into the main outpost.

There are at least 10 guards on duty from Area 2 at all times, behind spiked wood frames. Unless the PCs themselves were on watch overnight, the town's advance sentries were silently killed by skorn scouts before the attack begins. The assault from this direction is very loud, and intended to draw the attention of most of the outpost. Other guards from the barracks will assist in any fighting here, firing from windows or joining melee on the bridges. Being knocked into the fast flowing river requires a Str (Athletics) check at disadvantage to swim to a rock or shore, otherwise the character is swept off the falls to their doom.

If the PCs don't engage with the bridges, there is a 80% chance the NPC defenders are killed or otherwise overcome, and the beastmen pour into the outpost proper, slaying and looting.

Area 3 - Northern shore

From further up river, 2d4+4 large canoes carry 2d4 skorn in each, armed with short bows, flaming arrows and large clubs.

These beastmen attempt to quietly embark on the northern shore, before loosing flaming arrows to set buildings on fire. Once spotted, they discard their bows, hefting large clubs and closing for melee with enthusiastic grunting and teeth

gnashing. 1d4 are werewolf lycanthropes, the most fearsome, and revered, skorn warriors.

3d6+6 outlanders are nearby to defend the northern shore. If the PCs don't engage with this hot zone, there is a 90% chance the NPC defenders are overcome, and the beastmen take control of the northern quarter, razing the buildings in Areas 6 & 12.

Area 5 – Eastern Woods

From the eastern woods, having crossed the river with rafts, the other primary warband appears: 4d10+40 skorn, along with 2d4+1 ogre allies. When this force appears, a great cacophony of drums can be heard, emanating from the forest behind them.

The ogres are led by *Sorgat One Eye* (as *Ogre*, but *Boss Monster*, with 8 HD, Int 8), a vicious and (relatively) canny brute with a great metal sword that he stole from a giant's grave years ago. *Sorgat* has joined with the skorn on one condition: the ogres get first pick of the spoils (both treasure and manflesh).

Ogre, AC 12, HD 4+3, Spiked Club 2d8, 19: special, S19 D8 C15 I6 P7 W8 Ch7, L7, Mv 40 ft. When *staggered*, an ogre enters a murderous rage, gaining a free attack against every foe within reach. On a 19+ attack roll, the target rolls on the Injuries & Setbacks table (*Luck* (Con) save resists). 10 foot reach. *Sorgat* has 8 HD, is a *Boss Monster* with the usual benefits (LFG p.95, Int 8, Giant Sword 2d8+3).

There are 3d10+20 outlanders available to protect this area. If the PCs don't engage with the eastern woods, there is a 95% chance the defenders are overcome, and the buildings in Areas 10 and 12 are destroyed.

Battle Proper

Unless the party is able to repel the assault from all three directions (in which case, the battle is won, and the invaders slink away into the forest),

the outpost becomes a whirling melee of outlanders, skorn, dire wolves and ogres.

As the PCs navigate the battlefield, each time they enter a new Area, or spend more than a minute or two idle in the same location, roll 1d10 and consult the table below:

1. *Miners under attack!* 2d4 miners are being mauled by 1d4 *Dire Wolves*. The PCs might be able to save them, but a delay here might cost lives elsewhere. If the PCs have already been kept busy by another encounter on this table, 1d100% of the miners are dead by the time the PCs arrive.
2. *Archer volley!* A mass volley of skorn arrows strikes from the sky, causing 3d6 damage (*Luck* (Dex) save for half). About half of the arrows are alight, and cause any nearby buildings to catch fire, unless the PCs take preventative action.
3. *Ogre rush!* 1d4 *Ogres* appear from around a corner or copse of trees, roaring a bloodcurdling battle cry as they charge the PCs.
4. *Fire!* A nearby building is on fire, which is swiftly getting out of control. If the fire isn't dealt with, it will quickly spread to other buildings. The well at Area 11 might assist.
5. *Warband!* A warband of 5d6 *Skorn* come howling over a small rise or from behind a burning building, blood splattered and berserk, holding severed human heads like trophies!
6. *Sorgat*, the ogre leader, strikes down two men with savage sword blows and laughs horribly. Turning to look at the PCs, he points his blade at one of them and roars "*You next, fleshgrub!*"

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7. *Smoke*. Thick black smoke fills the area, wafting from several burning buildings. Visibility is reduced to 20 ft as the sounds of men fighting and dying fill the air. There is a 50% chance 1d3 *Dire Wolves* leap out of the haze to attack; otherwise the captain, *Teren* (Area 2), is on the cusp of death, kneeling in a pool of blood alongside three dead skorn.
 8. *Projectile wagon!* A burning wagon comes flying over a small building, crashing amongst the party (thrown by two ogres), causing 5d6 damage (*Luck* (Dex) save for half).
 9. 3d4 guardsmen are fighting for their lives in a pitched battle with 3d10 *Skorn*. It's not clear who, if anyone, is leading the guardsman. Most of the humans appear shaken and exhausted. The PCs might be able to save them, but a delay here might cost lives elsewhere. If the PCs have already been kept busy by another encounter on this table, 1d100% of the guard are dead by the time the PCs arrive.
 10. *Chelsa* (Area 7) or *Kreig* (p.2) is fighting desperately against *Karg Orok* (p.2) or *Sorgat* (Area 5), amidst 2d4 outlanders and twice as many skorn. If the PCs have already been kept busy by another encounter on this table, all of the guards are dead by the time the PCs arrive.

Centaur Stampede!

Unbeknownst to all concerned, a xenophobic centaur herd has also had its eye on Rivertop for many years, and seizes the opportunity to be rid of both the human and skorn squatters. Towards the end of the skorn assault, 2d10+20 centaurs suddenly appear from the western forest, thundering across the main bridge to kill everyone left in the outpost. These centaurs are the herd's most devoted, most fierce warriors,

well armoured and wielding metal weapons. To be defeated by lesser races like men and skorn would be heinously contemptible. They will not retreat lightly (advantage on all morale checks).

Centaur, AC 12, HD 2, Kick 1d6 and Mace/Spear/Bow 1d6+1, 19: the target suffers an extra 1d6 damage and is knocked prone by a ferocious kick, S18 D14 C15 I8 P13 W13 Ch10, L5, Mv 60 ft.

Aftermath

If the assault is not repelled, Rivertop is razed to the ground and any humans slaughtered. Some outlanders might escape via the cliffs, the mine tunnels or the forest, but the prospect of stragglers making it back to a fortified city is poor. If the PCs prevail, they are likely heralded as heroes of the "*Battle of Rivertop*", earning fame and some fortune (treasure wise, most battles will result in 1 x Carry Loot, and the PCs will be rewarded with 1 x 4 HD Lair Treasure (LFG p.136, 140) by Rivertop's merchant investors). After such an attack, how much longer outlanders will remain in Rivertop is highly uncertain; there is every chance the outpost will be abandoned once the current miner's rotation is complete.



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